



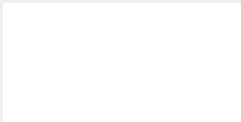
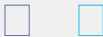
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Poisoned father, 4 kids leave hospital

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(b) (6) and the four unidentified children who have been hospitalized since Monday's deadly accidental pesticide poisoning at the family's home have now been released from Baptist St. Anthony's Hospital, according to a family friend.

"They have been released and ask that they be allowed to grieve in peace as they wait for Mrs. (b) (6) to hopefully get better," elementary school teacher Terry Rodriguez told the Amarillo Globe-News in a message on Facebook.

"She is still in critical (condition), but hasn't worsened any, which is good so far," Rodriguez said.

The family was reportedly released from the hospital Thursday.

On Wednesday night, BSA said they had "no information" on the five who had been hospitalized in Amarillo since they were discovered by a concerned family friend Monday morning in various states of unresponsiveness and in mortal danger from the pesticide's poison gas. Four other children died due to the exposure.

(b) (6), Peter's wife and mother to the children, remains in critical condition for a fifth day at University Medical Center in Lubbock after being airlifted there Monday.

Rodriguez started a GoFundMe account online for the family, which as of Friday afternoon had raised more than \$41,000.

Rodriguez has been providing updates on the family on the page, including news that funeral services for the four victims — (b) (6), 17; (b) (6), 11; (b) (6), 9, and (b) (6), 7 — will likely be held in the coming week.

The Salvation Army has reached out to a (b) (6) family representative to let them know the organization is ready to assist the family with the process of moving into a new home and getting replacement clothing.

According to Stephanie Pena, the public relations and donor development director for the Salvation Army, the family representative was referred to them by the local chapter of the American Red Cross.

While the (b) (6) family continues to recover, federal and state agencies — including Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and the Environmental

Protection Agency — continued their cleanup of the family's (b) (6) Street residence.

On Friday, officials reported finding residue of aluminum phosphide at the home, which they believe came from the Weevil-Cide pesticide.

“TCEQ and EPA have located remnants of aluminum phosphide pellets located under the house,” TCEQ media relations specialist Brian McGovern said. “The remnants from the activated pellets consisted of a grayish-white residual, which is consistent with spent (activated) aluminum phosphide.”

Investigators said (b) (6) had spread the heavily regulated pesticide under the home and then tried to rinse it away, creating the poisonous gas that killed four of his children.

TCEQ on Friday also provided details on what the ongoing cleanup process will entail since it has now located the source of the aluminum phosphide.

McGovern said the first step will be “removing the residual from beneath the house and placing it in a disposal container, where it will be monitored an additional 36 hours to ensure that the material has thoroughly reacted and is safe for proper transportation and disposal.”

TCEQ and EPA will also be “thoroughly dousing the underside of the house with water to ensure that possible remaining remnants of the pellets are activated and allowed to off-gas safely.”

Once the area under the home has been rinsed, it will be ventilated to allow the house to air out, he said. Throughout the process TCEQ and EPA will monitor the air quality in and around the home to ensure the safety of the public.

A 100-foot perimeter remains around the home, and TCEQ officials said any neighboring homes are not at risk.

“TCEQ and EPA have also been consulting with the product manufacturer and pest control industry experts to ensure the cleanup is conducted in a manner consistent with industry protocols,” McGovern said. “Contractors will remain on-site to continue air monitoring until the remediation is complete.”

The cleaning of the house along with the activation of any remaining aluminum phosphide has slowed the progress of some other aspects of the investigation.

The Amarillo Police Department and the Special Crimes Unit has yet to enter the house.

Special Crimes is investigating the deaths of the four (b) (6) children, as is the case whenever a child dies. According to APD Officer Jeb Hilton, police are not actively pursuing criminal charges against anyone at this time.

TDA is also continuing its investigation into how (b) (6) gained possession of the Weevil-Cide, which he said was given to him by “a friend,” and how that person may have obtained it, according to city and fire officials.

Details on the progress of TDA’s investigation were not available from Patton, and multiple calls to TDA officials asking about that aspect of the investigation were not returned.

In addition to the GoFundMe account and a fund established for the family with Amarillo National Bank, the outpouring of support from the community continued on Friday, particularly at the (b) (6) family parish, St. Laurence Catholic Church, which continues to accept donations of clothing and household items for the family.

“We’re still accepting donations,” Dalia Espinoza said.

“We’ve had lots of people bring in clothes and things like that. We’re very busy. Since Tuesday it’s been nonstop with the phone and people wanting to know how they can help.

“I didn’t think we would get this much support, but I am happy that we have it. The community has come together. I am happy we have it, but sad because of the tragedy.”

Espinoza said the church has also been holding nightly rosaries and Mass dedicated to the family at Mass at 6:30 p.m.
